

KNOW YOUR PHONE

Your Right To Privacy

Many people wish they had more privacy when it comes to the telephone. **What they may not know is that there** are laws in place that protect consumer privacy. Be aware that you have certain privacy rights.

Caller ID: A Caller ID device can be installed on a telephone, and display the name & number of the person calling that phone. If you have this popular device on your phone, you'll be able to see who's calling and determine if you do or do not wish to speak with the caller before answering.

You may decide that you do not want your phone number displayed on someone else's Caller ID device. You have the right to block your number.

If you choose **complete line blocking***, your number will automatically be blocked for every call you make. If you call someone who has a Caller ID device on their phone, that person will only see "Private" or "P" appear on their device. *Note: this service is available to any customer who states that they have a health or safety concern.*

If you choose **selective blocking*** or **per-call blocking***, your phone number is sent to the parties you are calling, and will appear on their display device unless you dial 067 on a touch tone phone or dial 1167 on a rotary phone, before dialing their number.

There is no way of knowing whether the person you are calling has a Caller ID device, but if you are concerned about having your number displayed, then choose a blocking option. For more information regarding blocking options, you can also refer to the front pages of your telephone book.

Be aware that if you elect Caller ID blocking, your phone number may *not* display on your area's emergency contact operator's Caller ID system, although it will display on a 911 emergency contact system. Make sure to ask your phone company how your Caller ID selection will affect display of your number on your area's emergency contact system.

Calls to **800, 888, and 900** numbers may not be Caller ID blocked.

Blocking options are free. Caller ID services involve monthly charges.

Unwanted or Harassing Calls

Obscene or threatening phone calls are frightening and annoying. They are an invasion of privacy. You have rights when it comes to unwanted or harassing calls.

There are programs available through local telephone companies which trace these types of calls. You can activate **Call Trace** by dialing *57 immediately after you hang up from an harassing call. If your problem isn't solved by using **Call Trace**, **contact** your local phone company to discuss further options.

In some instances there are fees for obtaining these services, and phone companies, while their services can be very helpful, do not guarantee that trapping or tracing will stop harassing calls from reaching you.

If you are receiving these calls on a regular basis, you may wish to install an answering machine and let the machine answer all of your calls. Your message might alert the callers that all of your calls are being traced. Ask your phone company for advice on how to handle these types of calls most effectively.

In addition, there are a number of newer "custom calling" options being marketed by local phone companies which may also assist in ending unwanted or harassing calls. These services include:

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| Call Block*: | Your phone can be programmed to reject calls from select numbers. |
| Special Call Acceptance*: | You can stop all calls from ringing except those you specifically program your phone to accept. |
| Call Return*: | This service allows you to call back the number of the last person who called you, even if you were unable to answer the phone. Caution: Using call return can transmit your number to the party who called. |
| Priority Ringing*: | Your phone can be programmed to ring in two different ways, allowing you to accept certain calls and reject others. |

Each telephone company has its own brand names & fees for these services.

In Maine, you may call 1-800-452-4699 and a Consumer Specialist will assist you.

You may access our web page at: <http://www.state.me.us/mpuc/mtf.htm>

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